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ABSTRACT

Folk high schools, study circles, labor market training, union education, and municipal adult schools are the major providers of adult education in Sweden. For the most part, these programs are financed by the government and are tuition free. Folk high schools, which are the oldest type, were founded to provide young adults with a general civic education and to familiarize them with their local traditions and national heritage and history. More than 250,000 study circles are furnished by ten study associations sponsored by trade unions, farmers, and political parties. Of the various types of adult education, these circles, which provide nonformal, leisure-time education, have the highest enrollment. Labor market training has fifty centers to give occupational training courses for the unemployed and young adults entering the job market. The unions educate their members in unionism and civic matters and stress the skills required for union leadership. A relatively recent development, municipal adult schools, is aimed at adults who have not completed a nine-year comprehensive education. Their curriculum includes the standard courses for grades 7-12 as well as vocational courses, and their graduates may apply to universities and professional schools. (Other forms of adult education are presented briefly, and a bibliography is included.) (ELG)

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# Center Spotlight

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## ADULT EDUCATION IN SWEDEN

by

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### Sweden: A Portrait

Sweden in many ways is a symbol of the ultra-modern state. It is a country that has developed one of the world's highest standards of living, one of the world's most properous economies, and promises its citizens one of the world's longest life expectancies. It is a country that has moved from a predominantly agrarian economy to a modern industrial one within a relatively short period of time. Sweden represents a form of social democracy which is unique to the Western world. A small country, both in size and population, Sweden serves as a model to other small countries of the world.

Sweden, one of the northern most countries of the world, is approximately the same geographical size as the state of California and twice the size as the United Kingdom. With an area of 173,732 square miles (450,000 square kilometres), its length from north to south is 1,000 miles and with an average width of 300 miles. Sweden shares the Scandinavian peninsula with Norway and to the northeast, a short border separates Sweden from Finland. Denmark lies to the southwest across a narrow sound. Extensive archipelagoes are found both on the west coast and along the east coast which faces the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Bothnia. Some 9 percent of Sweden's surface is covered by tens of thousands of lakes and rivers.

Sweden's three major territorial divisions are Gotaland, Svealand and Norrland Gotaland, the southern quarter of the country and the Baltic islands of Gotland and Oland, possesses limited fertile soil, and due to the Gulf Stream, a climate favorable for agriculture. Although the Gulf Stream allows for farming, there is a scarcity of fertile soil.[1] The western part of Gotaland, especially Gothenberg, contains the industrial and shipping focus of Sweden, and it is also one of the rapidly growing areas as a result of the rural to urban population migration.

[1] Although Sweden is at the same latitude as Alaska and southern Greenland, its climate is much more temperate. This is because the Gulf Stream flows past the coast of Norway, where westerly winds spread some of its warmth over the southern part of Sweden.

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Svealand the central part of Sweden, includes the capital city, Stockholm. Norrland occupies the northern half of the country and although Norrland's population is sparse, Sweden's most important natural resources are located in this area. This region possesses iron ore, forests, and water power.

Sweden is divided into 24 counties, plus Stockholm which forms its own administrative unit. The size and boundaries of these counties are largely a matter of historical development and vary considerably. The counties are divided into smaller units called municipalities.

Sweden with a population of over 8.2 million people has one of the world's lowest birth and mortality rates. Over 100 years ago, the population was rapidly expanding with almost every age classification being larger than the preceding one. Today, with the declining birth rate, the average age of the population has narrowed to the 25 to 40 age group which means that the childbearing generation is small. Currently, the average life expectancy has risen to over 72 years of age.

The population density of Sweden is very uneven. Except for some coastal regions that face the Baltic Sea, northern Sweden is very sparsely settled. The country's most populated area is in a belt running from Stockholm to Goteborg and south to Malmo. Over 90 % of the Swedish people are living in the southern half of the country, the area expected to have the greatest future population growth.

Since World War II, Sweden has experienced considerable immigration. Although most immigrants are young, and come to find work, Sweden's immigration policy has for many years guaranteed political freedom. Since 1960's government efforts have been directed to assist immigrants in their adjustment to Swedish society. For example, a law in 1973 entitles all adult immigrants 240 hours of free Swedish language instruction during paid working time and increasing consideration is being given to such factors as the social needs and adjustment difficulties of immigrants.

Forestry has long been one of the main sectors of the Swedish economy and accounts for over 1/4 of the Swedish exports to other countries. Although Sweden has less than 1 percent of the world's forest resources, the economic value of the forests is high. This is primarily due to specialization in the types of trees grown, and favorable cutting and transportation conditions. Of the total forest areas, 25% is owned by the government, 25% is owned by private corporations and 50% is owned by private owners, mainly farmers.

Today, Sweden accounts for approximately 6% of the world's production of iron ore and for over 13% of the world's exports.[1] Mining and the production of charcoal iron is the mainstay of Sweden's industrialization. Much of the nation's early exports was based on Britain's need for iron in the 18th century. With Britain's use of coke to make iron, Sweden's emphasis on the production of the highest quality steel began. The production of specialty steel support the domestic engineering industry. Most of the steel companies are located in the central part of Sweden and are comprehensive in that they handle the entire production process from mining to the finished manufactured items.

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[1] Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken. Some Data About Sweden: 1974-75. Stockholm, Sweden, 1974.

Sweden's energy is based principally on domestic hydroelectric power which fulfills about 80% of its electrical needs. Although it is a country rich in timber and water, Sweden lacks fossil fuel resources. The water power resources are located in the northern rivers which account for more than 3/4 of the hydro plants. Over 85% of the electrical consumption is in the central and southern regions. With the full use of hydroelectric power and expanding energy needs, Sweden is considering other power sources such as nuclear and oil.

Sweden has a parliamentary constitution. Parliament(the Riksdag) has one chamber, elections to which are held every three years. In 1976, parliamentary election resulted in a change of government. The Social Democrats were put out of office after 44 years in power and replaced by a coalition of the Centre Party, the Moderates and the Liberals. The monarchy lacks any political power under the constitution and functions purely as a representative of the government.

## Adult Education in Sweden

Swedish adult education which exists in a variety of forms has equally varies origins. Study circles, municipal and state operated schools, correspondence schools, folk high schools and labor market training have all developed along separate lines, supported by different popular movements, and different governmental agencies.

A major purpose of Swedish adult education is to enable adults to enhance their potential, to prepare for further studies, to provide knowledge and skills for the job world, to think critically, and to improve abilities to take an active part in shaping society. Over and above these general goals, adult education has several special aims. A central mission is to provide additional educational opportunities which basic and secondary schools have failed to achieve.

Adult education also offers opportuniities to satisfy needs for new knowledge in order to meet changes in society and working life. It is accepted that the level of educational obtainment achieved in early years should not preclude an individual's future for improvement. It makes new educational opportunities available to facilitate career orientations, job changes and mobility on the labor market.

During its early history much of adult education sought to supplement brief and inadequate schooling by offering facilities for elementary studies as in Swedish and mathematics. But as compulsory education was lengthened with the expansion of the school system, Swedish adult education has no longer had to fill this gap.

Today, Swedish adult education is a multi-faceted effort that attempts to fulfill individual needs based on a technological society that is constantly changing, i. e., seeking new and improved technology.

## The Folk High School

The folk high school, as an adult education form, is uniquely Scandinavian and is an integral part of the Swedish educational system. It is a movement conceived in Denmark by Bishop Nicholai Frederick Severin Grundtvig (1783- 1872), a Danish poet, historian, preacher, and statesman. He is referred to as "the Prophet of the North."

Grundtvig believed people are not isolated individuals, but rather are bonded together by societal and national interests. He stressed the importance of patriotism. He recognized that the concept of nationalism existed before Christianity. Schools focused on humanistic concerns which allow Christianity to become a reality.

Grundtvig proposed the folk high school concept in 1832. It emphasized subjects such as Danish history, literature, language, and social conditions. Teaching was conducted in the native language as a means to foster national pride and to enrich personal development. An understanding of society and self, according to Grundtivg, could not be attained until adulthood. In folk high schools, scholars and laymen were brought together in a learning environment unhindered by examinations and admissions requirements.

As a result of the efforts of Chisten Flor and support given by the Danish Association of Education, Grundtvig's concept of a folk high school was implemented in 1844 at the German-Danish border city of Rodding.

Gage summarized the role of the folk high school as follows:

> Idealistic and nationalistic in the extreme, the early folk high schools had as their main subject 'the national and civic life we (the Danes) all can and must share.' They eschewed examinations and grades and virtually all the other baggage that the prevailing 'Latin' educational systems carred. Relying heavily on the 'living word' (as opposed to 'book learning'), they set out 'to provide the students with the necessary background for judging contemporary social and human problems, to review and extend the students's basic education, and to increase their general knowledge.' They were to train peasants and workers to be critical citizens, not scholars.[1]

The rationale and many of the operational aspects of the Danish folk high school movement were regarded as the standard by which folk high schools were developed in other Scandinavian countries. Within the short span of two generations, this unique form of adult education developed throughout Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland.

With the introduction of compulsory elementary education in 1842 and with the passage of the People's Act in 1866 and the creation of a bicameral parliamentary system which gave rural populations a voice in the Swedish Riksdag, the folk high school concept emerged as a means by which farmers and peasants were able to become better informed and involved in the political process.[2] The dissolvement of the four estates (nobility, clergy, burghers, and peasants. and the establishment of a two-level legislature created a need to improve the educational level of sparsely settled rural areas. During the formative years of Swedish democracy adult education was one of the major means for expanding the democratic process. [3]

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[1] Gene G. Gage, "Lifelong Learning, Scandinavian Style," Scandinavian Review 64, No. 1, March, 1976, p.37.

[2] The law required each county to provide at least one school so that elementary education would be provided from age seven to thirteen. The purpose was to provide general education to the people as reflected in its name "folkskola" or people's school.

[3] Herman Erickson,"Adult Education and Swedish Political Leadership," International Review of Education 12, 1966, p. 130.

The first Swedish folk high schools were formed in 1868. Of the three schools initiated, the Hvilan school was the first to become operational. The Hvilan school introduced advanced courses in 1876 and a major agricultural program in 1888. The school's proximity to the University of Lund and the director's association with the faculty at Lund, contributed to the school's initial success.

The overall purpose of the early folk high schools was stated as follows:

To impart to young adults general and civic education, the main stress being put upon a stimulating instruction calculated to promote and further individual thinking and moral strength and which ensures that the pupils shall be made familiar with their local conditions and traditions and with their country, its historical development and present social conditions, its spiritual and material resources.[1]

Essentially their purpose was to make education functional, to provide a means for the application of knowledge to needs, and to enrich life through greater knowledge of national heritage.

At the turn of the 20th century, folk high schools existed for the agrarian population. There was even discussion to call the schools, "farmers' schools." Students came from farms and small rural villages. The rural emphasis caused discontent among urban populations. Laboring classes did not participate in folk high school programs during this period of industrialization. In 1906, the poet Karl-Erik Forsslund founded a folk high school for industrial workers. Conflicts between rural and urban populations were de-emphasized with the high unemployment of the 1920's and 1930's. More and more adults went to folk high schools from all walks of life. Folk high schools were founded to help cope with unemployment, especially among young adults.

Other folk high school were formed and developed unique programs throughout the 1900's. For example, a school for seasonally unemployed workers was founded in Stockholm in 1916 which was sponsored by the Workers Education Association. The Swedish temperance movement founded a folk high school at Wendelsberg in 1908. The Stigtuna Folk High School, a Christian Folk High School supported by the Swedish Christian Youth Movement, was founded by Manfred Bjorquist who was later named Bishop of Stockholm. Between the years 1942-1949, schools were founded for the Lapps who are nomadic and live in the northern part of Sweden.

In the early days of the folk high school movement, the schools were privately financed by individuals and organizations. Eventually, the Swedish Royal Board of Education recognized two types of folk high schools. County council schools were attended by persons from a county and adjacent areas. Other schools recruited students from throughout the entire country. These latter schools were financed by different national movements.

Although today folk high schools do not enroll the largest number of adult students, they are the oldest form of organized Swedish adult education designed to maintain its own freedom and independence. The folk high school exists in the midst of the Swedish educational system with its own distinctive identity.

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1. Paul Bergevin, Adult Education in Sweden: An Introduction, Indiana University Monograph Series in Adult Education, No.1, Bureau of Studies in Adult Education, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 1961, p.30.

It has a unique mission and continues to serve a vital purpose. Through its programs, it fosters individual liberty and personal development. Of over 100 Swedish folk high schools, better than half of them are affiliated with popular movements; the remainder are associated with county and municipal governments.

A majority of folk high schools provide residential programs. There is not a mandated curriculum. Each school develops and offers a unique program in the best interest of its students. A significant feature of the schools is extensive student participation in educational planning and implementation. Generally, there are three distinct types of courses. Winter courses are very common and are offered from November to April a 27-34 week period. About 80% of students who accumulate as much as a years course work at a folk high school and attend winter course offerings have their origin in early folk high school offerings which attracted farmers who studied during the long winter months. Summer courses are offered for approximately a thirteen-week period. Specialized short courses of a few days or weeks duration are also provided.

A common feature of most folk high schools is the offering of a general education. The basic premise in society is as functional as the people of which it is composed. Citizens with a limited education are a major focus of the schools. This is felt to be a form of personal and societal improvement. Courses such as Swedish, literature, history, social studies, psychology, chemistry, and biology are common offerings. Most schools are not meant to be vocational and do not provide a training curriculum intended as preparation for employment.

Since 1970, the training of teachers for folk high schools has been provided by the University of Linkoping of teachers and administrators most of whom have a university degree and are experienced in adult education. The university program requires one year of special training. In the near future, teacher training college experience in addition to a university education will be required.

A Folk High School Bill was enacted July 1, 1977 which brought about by a need for clarification and change in the folk high schools. The bill focused on such features as the relationship of the folk high school with other educational forms, the offering of long and short course, and the financial operations of the institutions. Perhaps the most important was the reaffirmation that the folk high schools were to impart a general civic education and that vocational education curricula should be made subordinate to the goals of a general civic education. In addition, the in-residence programs were noted as having special value, and were not to be detracted by the opening of branch schools and short-term day courses.

The folk high school movement has maintained its unique educational role in Swedish society. As societal needs emerged along with a desire for new educational opportunities, the folk high school has provided Swedish society a means for maintaining its culture and heritage.

## Study Circles

One of the unique features of the adult education movement in Sweden in terms of participation as well as subjects offered is the Swedish Study Circle. By far the largest number of adult learners, an equivalent of five out of eleven adults between the ages of 20 and 65, voluntarily attend study circles sponsored by popular movements. The study circle movement, an integral part of Sweden's lifelong learning concept, had its beginnings in the Swedish Industrial Revolution during the middle part of the 19th century. The transition from rural to urban life and from an agrarian to a manufacturing economy initiated migration and immigration of people as well as changes in living patterns. Popular movements were formed to assist people in response to the economic and social demands created by the urban-industrial era.[1]

These movements sought to improve living and working conditions for their members. People realized that society could not or would not provide the type of education that was necessary to adjust to a changing environment. Although compulsory education was initiated in 1846, the adult society did not have the benefits of education.

The temperance movement, an early reform effort, developed in response to social changes brought about by the industrial revolution especially the problems created by alcoholism. One specific teetotaler group, the International Order of Good Templars,[2] insisted on total abstinence and emphasized ceremonial rituals. The leadership soon realized that to be effective a variety of social activities would be needed to reinforce the goals of the movement. These took the form of dances, amateur theater, and book discussion programs.

The Good Templars had established an organized study program as early as 1896. Six years later Oscar Olsson who was the Director of Studies modified the study program and used small study circles rather than large lecture groups. Olsson's idea was for a group of interested members to meet on a regular basis and discuss a particular topic. The group did not have a trained teacher, but rather selected a circle leader from participating members who were responsible for leading discussions. The study circle concept quickly expanded to other 19th and 20th century popular movements and of large interest organizations.

In 1906 government subsidies were provided for study circle activities to buy study materials for group members. Later, these collections were turned over to municipalities for the establishment of city libraries. Public libraries had its beginnings with study circles.

The use of study circles as a means of providing for popular education was adopted by other movements. By 1912 the labor movement had organizationally coordinated its educational activities by establishing a study association known

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[1] A Programme for Sound and Pictures in Education. The Commission for the Continued Use of Radio and Television in Education. Stockholm, Sweden, 1975, p. 14.

[2] The Order of Good Templars is an international temperance organization. The United States version was formed in 1851 at Utica, New York.

as the Workers' Educational Association (ABF).[1] Other popular movements followed the educational example provided by the temperance and labor movements.

In the 1920's the Farmers'Movement established the Swedish Country-Side Study Association (SLS) and the Liberal Study Association (LIS) to provide greater learning opportunities for rural populations. These two associations merged in 1967 and became the Adult School Association (SV).

A group of university professors, in the early 1940's, organized a study association for people who were unable to attend a university. This was the beginning of an association known as Kursverksamheten (KV). The Church Movement and the Free Church Movement as well as different political parties, also founded or joined educational associations during the 1930's and the 1940's.[2]

Today there are ten nationally recognized educational associations which receive government subsidies for adult education programs. Most of the ten educational associations are affiliated with national organizations and popular movements. As Strawn states "This means that the study associations have kept their close ties with the mass-based groups like trade unions, farmers, political parties and others whose antecedents originated in the Popular Movements, and these members of the study associations all share a common ideology."[3] These educational associations are:

1. Workers' Educational Association. The Workers' Educational Association is primarily associated with labor unions, the Social Democratic Party and organizations for handicapped persons.

2. Salaried Employees' Educational Association. This educational association is affiliated with the Swedish Central Organization of Salaried Employees, a trade union organized to prot[illegible] the economic and social interests of salaried employees.

3. Study Promoti[illegible]nal Association. This association is affiliated with a number of organizations for the promotion of outdoor recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, riding, camping, hiking, and the like. Politically and religiously it is not affiliated with any national organization.

4. Citizens' Educational Association. The Citizens' Educational Association is aligned with the Conservative Party and cooperates closely with a number of organizations associated with Sweden's private business sector.

5. University Extension Association. This study association, like the Study Promotional Association, is not tied to any national organization, or members in national organizations. It is affiliated to the universities of Stockholm, Uppsala, Linkoping, Lund, Goteborg and Umea and attempts to offer courses that are politically, religiously and ideologically neutral. Participants for study circle courses are recruited from the general public.

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[1]The Swedish initials for the association are provided within the parenthesis.

[2]William Strawn, "Sweden's Study Associations," Current Sweden, No. 170. August, 1977, p. 2.

[3]Ibid.

6. Adult Education Association. The Adult Education Association is affiliated with the Centre Party, the Liberal Party, farmers' unions and co-operative organizations.

7. YWCA-YMCA Educational Association. The Association is based on and tied to the national and international organization of Christian fellowship. It promotes Christian character through group activity and citizenship. Its prgorams include a broad range of activities such as sports and physical education, counseling, public affairs and citizenship training.

8. Temperance Educational Association. One of the earliest associations founded on the bases of a popular movement was the International Order of Good Templars at the turn of the 19th century. Its program focuses on social activities as well as education for abstinence.

9. Educational Association of the Free Churches of Sweden. This association is supported by most of the free churches and their memberships. The older nonconformist groups are represented by the Swedish Missionary Society, the Baptist Church, the Methodist Church, and the Pentecostal Movement.

10. Educational Association of the Swedish Church. The association is affiliated with the Swedish State Church. Church membership is theoretically 100 percent, but yet only a fraction of the Swedish population actively participates in the Church.

Educational associations sponsor a variety of educational programs including lectures, films, and most importantly,study circles. Participation in a study circle is open to anyone who wishes to join. Even though particular study associations provide topics with a certain political and ideological preference based upon their affiliations, all of the associations offer a wide range of courses which are not value oriented. Sweden is a sparsely settled country and often there are no study association alternatives. Frequently and especially in one-industry small towns, study circle selection is based on the subjects being offered and whichever circle is being held closest to home.

A study circle is defined as a group of participants who meet for the purpose of planning and implementing a study program over a subject or problem area. No special qualifications are required for joining a study circle, except that a person must be at least fourteen years old. There are no tests, grades, or certificates awarded for completing a study circle. The primary appeal of study circles is that people can come together at a mutually agreed time, plan and pace their studies, and pursue areas of personal interest among friends.

Each study circle appoints a circle leader to coordinate and administer the program planning and study activities. The circle leader is not a teacher but is a facilitator or moderator for the circle. The group making up a circle assist each other in their studies in order to achieve a common goal. For most study circles, a member of the circle is selected to provide this role. In this sense, there are no formal requirements for circle leaders.

In some instances, circle leaders are specifically trained in teaching techniques. This is specifically true in the skill areas such as languages and vocational areas. These circle leaders still provide a facilitator role with the help of learning materials and workbooks. The study circle emphasis is still on participatory and self-directed learning.

The Swedish State government sponsorship of study circles, certain criteria need to be met. First, there must be at least five to twenty participants in a

study circle. Second, attendance registers must be kept. Third, at least twenty lesson hours within a specified period of time must be fulfilled. Fourth, if a topic of study is political, all sides of the topic must be examined. Government subsidies range between 75% and 90% of the study circle's expenses. The remaining expenses are provided either by special grants from municipal authorities or special fees charged participants or both.

The role of study circles occupies a unique and important role in the Swedish adult education movement. It is a primary means for nonformal and leisure-time education. Currently, there are over 250,000 study circles being sponsored by the ten educational associations annually. Over two million adults are participating each year in study circles. Study circles provide an immediate opportunity for the mass population to learn in a systematic way without prerequisites or competency requirements and are a means for closing the knowlege gap within an ever-changing society.

## Labor Market Training

The overall rationale for labor market training programs is to assist adults to obtain jobs through education and to assist businesses to obtain needed manpower. In other words, programs of this nature are employment creating measures. The purpose is to enable unemployed persons and those who will become unemployed to be trained for different occupations which provide steady employment.[1] The training provided must be for specific occupations rather than to occupational branches. Given this rationale and purpose, labor market training provides for (1) retaining courses for marketable job skills, (2) continuation courses as a means to improve present job skills, and (3) job training courses for young adults who are entering the job market.

Labor market training and subsidies are also for people who are threatened by unemployment or difficult to place on the labor market. Typically, these are Swedes who have the lowest educational attainment. Special consideration is usually given to handicapped individuals who desire to be economically self-sufficient. In addition, immigrants who need to acquire basic language and job skills are usually accepted into programs.

Labor market training programs are provided under the auspices of the National Labor Market Board, the National Board of Education and representatives of employees and employers associations. The National Labor Market Board determines the scope and location of training, and the recruitment of participants. The National Board of Education is responsible for the administration and teaching aspects of the program. Also the training programs are planned together with the public employment service agency which must determine that the proposed training will make the participant more employable.

Most of the labor market training courses are held at some 50 training centers geographically located throughout Sweden. Several of the centers operate branch programs in surrounding locations. The operational responsibilities for the centers are assigned to the National Board of Education. Each of the centers are staffed by employment counselors who assist participants to find jobs.

[1] Seasonal unemployment, temporary work stoppages and structural changes in industry are frequent causes of unemployment.

The Centers' offerings are mainly vocational in nature and are organized around specific training objectives. For those participants who are uncertain about their training choice there is an information course provided called "Workshop Life and Training." The course provides both a theoretical and practical orientation to the world of work. A diagram of the three main stages of the course is provided in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

Diagram to illustrate Working Life and Training activities

| State I<br>General information and introduction | Stage II<br>Vocational practice | Stage III<br>Extension |
|---|---|---|
| Introduction | in 2-3 freely chosen sectors | Possible extension of vocational practice and/or theoretical vocational guidance |
| Society, commerce and industry today | | |
| Labour market information, vocational guidance | | |
| Labour market interests | | |
| Economy of movement, health and ergonomics | | |
| Introduction to the firm | | |
| Introduction to working life | | |

In the course, participants are provided an opportunity to work at different jobs as a means to gain a better perspective of themselves. In some instances, this practical experience which usually lasts for about three weeks leads to an apprenticeship with a business.

Courses offered by the centers are developed on a modular system which can be offered separately or combined with other modules to fulfill specific training needs. Further, courses are scheduled as far in advance as possible to allow for continuous admission without division into terms. The overall intent is to adapt and provide courses in a prompt response to occupational trends and specific job needs. An exception to the general procedures and clientele of market labor training concerns "bottleneck skills", i. e., the need for job skills where labor is in short supply. Eligibility for such training is extended to persons who are already employed, but who wish job mobility and/or advancement. Examples of occu-

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[1] The National Swedish Board of Education, Labour Market Training: A Presentation. Second Edition. Stockholm: Liber Laromdel, 1975, p. 18.

pational areas where courses are designed to provide "bottleneck skills" are in the engineering industry and the nursing sector.

A similar course is the Adjustment and Training course for handicapped persons, e.g, the blind and partially sighted, the hard of hearing, orthopedially handicapped, persons whose deficient intellectural capacity renders them hard to place. The aim of this course is partly the same as Working Life and Training, namely, to make it easier for trainees to choose the training and work they desire. The course also sets out to provide instruction and training designed to compensate for different handicaps and to assist participants in becoming as independent as possible in their home, at work and in their spare time.

The qualifications for participating in a labor market training program include the following: (1) The person is about to become unemployed or is difficult to place in employment. (2) The person must be at 20 years old. Exempted from the minimum age requirement are handicapped persons, unmarried mothers, refugees, and other special populations. Age exception may also be granted for "bottleneck skill" training.

Once accepted, participants are given free tuition, free instructional materials, traveling and clothing allowances, and a tax-exempt monthly allowance for housing and family. The amount of the allowance is determined by previous income. A participant's pension is paid through the social insurance program. Overall program funding is provided by the government and by a special charge levied on employers.

Another form of labor market training is in-plant training. That is, the training conducted on the premises of industrial or commercial firms. The basic motive of these government grants is to make it easier for the hard-to-place person to obtain training and work. Frequently, this means the older and/or handicapped person. Another motive is to support regional economics through development policy. For example, when new firms are established in the northern areas of Sweden, where declining employment is a problem, in-plant training for expanding industries constitutes an important aspect of economic development.

Training grants intended to prevent worker layoffs can also be obtained by businesses. The purpose of such grants is to avoid layoffs especially when the regional and national economy is declining. By receiving more training, employees are more apt to improve their opportunities for work instead of becoming unemployed. Businesses also benefit by having more highly skilled employees.

There are also equality subsidies which are grants given to businesses to hire and train women for certain male-dominated occupations and men for certain female-dominated ones. The intent is to bring about a more equitable distribution of sexes within certain fields.

Labor market training in its various forms has developed into an increasingly important component of Swedish labor market policy. Its impact is both regional and national in scope. Of all the Swedish adult education forms, it has to be constantly adapted to meet new new production and service requirements in the economy. It is a vital link between government, education, and business.

## Education and Unions

Sweden has one of the world's strongest union movements. Unionization includes both management and labor. Few blue and white collar groups are not affiliated with a union. By virtue of its numerical strength, the union movement has had great political influence and has brought about numerous labor reforms including free medical care, rent subsidies , and participation in company decision-making. Most unions have been organized on an industry wide basis, resulting in unions for groups such as metal workers, salaried employees and university professors. Practially all employment groups, from secretaries to highly paid professionals, have been organized and bargain collectively with management for salary and job benefits.

Some major Swedish union organizations are as follows:

1. Central Organization of Salaried Employees founded in 1944 consists of over 36 unions including the Swedish Union of Clerical and Technical Employees in Industry and the Swedish Foremen and Supervisors Union. It includes over 70% of Sweden's white collar workers. The organizations major mission is to protect the economic and social interests of salaried employees.

2. The Swedish Trade Union Federation founded at the turn of the Century includes more than 25 affiliated unions with a total membership approaching two million. Organized on the basis of industrial unionism, it also includes several craft unions. Although the Federation does not represent any political party, affiliation of local unions with the Social Democratic Party is widespread.

3. The Swedish Employers Confederation consists of 39 affiliated employers associations representing a large variety of industries. The primary purpose of the Confederation is to represent its membership in labor relations and to provide labor market analysis. Membership includes industries such as manufacturing, house, and road construction, transportation, and mining. A major purpose is to provide support for member employers when negotiating with workers and salaried employees. The confederation provides compensatory funds to firms when losses result from labor conflicts.

4. The National Federation of Government Employees has a relatively small membership. It represents about 20,000 military personnel and civil government servants. The major reason for forming a central organization was the deteriorating salaries of senior civil servants, especially among middle and higher salaried personnel.

5. The Confederation of Professional Association founded in 1947 is an independent organization for academically trained salaried employees and professionals. Membership consists of those who have graduated from university professional programs such as lawyers, dentists, and doctors.

Union education has several purposes. Unions readily acknowldege that educational programs are an important means for providing membership with a knowledge of unionism and civic matters and with the necessary skills to represent unions in a variety of leadership roles. As a result of economic change occuring in Swedish life, continual change in the working environment and increased participation of membership in the negotiation process, union education is essential at the local, district,and national levels. The enhancement of the Swedish worker, as

frequently stated, necessitates a constructive approach to change improvement. It is a premise of their educational program that willingness and ability of union members to assume responsibility and exercise their democratic rights are directly related to the state of their knowledge.

The union movement is especially concerned with the needs and potential of the young members who will be the union leaders of the future. It is recognized that there is a need to ensure a continuous flow of capable union leaders, whether for part or full time leadership roles. Ordinarily, about 10% of its membership is employed by a union.

The Young Socialists movement is generally regarded as "the seminary of the labor movement." Its purpose is to encourage young people about the age of 20 who are in school to attend union meetings and take an active part in labor activities. Participation in union study groups, evening classes, special week-end courses, evening classes, correspondence courses, and conferences is encouraged. By reaching more and more young people, union support is expanded.

The unions arrange for courses in unionism as well as courses in basic subjects such as Swedish and mathematics. Other course topics include industrial safety, auditing procedures, leadership, negotiations, and economics. The major educational formats used by unions include the following:

1. Residential oriented courses offered for short periods of time.
2. Courses and programs provided at two national union schools.
3. Conferences offered for members before and after negotiations.
4. Courses provided at the local union level. The various formats are designed to be complementary. Educational programming is coordinated nationally by the major unions.

The strong emphasis by all unions on collective bargaining at the local level not only requires negotiation skills on the part of union leaders, but just as importantly requires educational insight on the part of rank and file members. This is particularly important when coordinated bargaining is desired among the organizational levels of a union, as well as among different unions. Increased democracy requires educational sophistication. Such sophistication is essential if members are to willingly participate in the decision-making process. Generally, "every work-place with more than 4-5 employees has some form of trade union base organization or at any rate a trade union contact man." Unions providing membership with information and training related to various labor laws that mandate democratization in the labor market and their place of employment. Labor laws have given the trade union organizations influence over personnel policy and employment security. Other legislation encouraged participation in educational programs. The so-called Delegates Act, enacted in 1974, allowed union delegates to inform employees of educational offerings and to recruit adult education participants during working hours. The question of leave of absence for study resulted in the Study leave Act of 1975. The act provided public and private employees the

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1. Karlof Anderson, "How Democratic Is the Trade Union Movement?" Current Sweden No. 65, February, 1975, p. 3.

right to a leave of absence for study with pay. Unions have the right to determine applicant priority and type of study leave to be granted. Generally, preference for study leave is given to those studying union subjects, those with less than 9 years' compulsory schooling and those with irregular working hours. An employer can postpone a leave of absence for study for a maximum of 14 days.

The Union concept and worker participation in company decision-making can be traced to popular movements of the 1860's.[1] It was during this period that the more prosperous Western European countries began buying the raw materials and semi-finished products of Sweden's large mineral and forest resources. At the turn of the century, over 70% of the Swedish population earned its living from agriculture as compared to 23% in 1950. The first workers' associations formed in the late 1800's were allied to popular movements and efforts to improve workers' cultural standards and general knowledge.

For a number of reasons, the popular movements could not adequately meet the educational needs of the unions. Union leaders believed that social progress would result from social equality and that social equality would be achieved when union members developed economic knowledge and solidarity equal to that of employers. Unions needed to provide training to their branch officials, negotiators and shop stewards which particularly emphasized up-dating members as to legislation.

After several years of holding special residential courses for union members from all over the country, the Swedish trade Union Confederation established a trade union school in 1926. The school was associated with a folk high school in Brunnsvik. In 1939, a second school was planned for Rūno, situated on an island in the Stockholm archipelago. The school was opend in 1952.

Although the work council concept, attributed to Swedish socialist Ernst Wigforss, beginning in the 1920's, it was not until 1946 that agreement was reached between the various national unions to form work councils. The notion of workers having an influence in company affairs was presented by Migferss in a pamphlet entitled Industrial Democracy. He did not advocate workers should have all the rights and power of management but said employees through the concept of industrial democracy has evolved to mean the joint influence exerted by employees in the course of their daily work through increased worker education in the operation of a company, industrial democracy could be advanced.

Work Councils were organized at all factories having more than 25 employees. The Councils were established to discuss areas of common interest and concern with management, but were not intended to take over management's decision-making role. Some of the major purposes of councils were improvement of production, and health and safety conditions, promotion of employment, security and vocational training and development of employee awareness of economic and financial aspects of companies. Both labor and management deemed it important to avoid direct government interference in the labor market. It was hoped that employees and employers would provide open access to information related to one another's needs as a result of mutual

1. The term industrial democracy has been used to describe employee participation in the decision making process of the company in which they work. In some Western European countries, it has become institutionalized through a variety of employee-manager committees.

agreements between labor and management.

Negotiations between the Swedish Employers' Confederation and the Confederation of Swedish Trade unions have been continuous in the context of a stable political climate and a national economy which has not been redirected by wars or other types of military conflicts. The Social Democratic Party has controlled the government for more than 40 years. Complete nationalization or socialization has not taken place, primarily as a result of the strength of minority parties. Within this setting, the work council system's function has been one of consultation function rather than one of determination.

## Municipal Adult Schools

In comparison to Sweden's other adult education programs, municipal adult schools are a relatively recent development. In the early 1950's private evening gymnaisia were established as an educational alternative for adults who had not completed a nine-year comprehensive education. Students could enroll in one or more studies, earn course credit, and qualify for university entrance. The schools offered their programs and courses during evening hours and charged a tuition.

With the need for more educational opportunities, especially for the undereducated, and with the increasing popularity of the above described educational alternative, the national government passed an act in 1967-1968, which directed municipalities to provide free evening coursework. Programs were to correspond to offerings of the comprehensive school. Private evening schools found themselves unable to compete with free municipal schools and many merged with institutions established by municipalities. Since 1968 an official adult education system which provides a comprehensive completion program adults has been initiated. The major purposes of this new educational alternative is to provide adults the opportunity to acquire needed skills, fulfill prerequisite requirements that qualify them for further studies, or enable them to meet entry level requirements for certain professions. Courses are the same as those in ordinary children's schools and provide the same academic competency.

Municipal adult schools are controlled by the school boards of each local authority. The schools offer instruction in accordance with the national curriculum for grades 7-12, as well as in special vocational and technical courses. Most of the courses are taught in the evening, although some daytime courses are scheduled. Generally, students enroll on a part-time basis, and taking one or two courses a term. Students can enroll on a full-time basis, but such enrollment is uncommon.

To qualify for admission to a municipal adult school, an applicant must be at least 17 years of age. Applicants to adult courses equivalent to grades 7-9 must be at least 15 years old at the start of their first term. Generally, older and less educated adults are given admission preference. To date, statistics show the majority of enrollees are women who presumably wish to re-enter the labor force. Course instruction is provided by regular school teachers and courses are often held in comprehensive school facilities.

Dominantvocational subjects are industry and handicrafts, home technology, and commercial and office subjects. English, mathematics, Swedish and German are some of the more popular subjects within the comprehensive curriculum. Students are provided educational counseling, tutoring, and financial aid if needed. Some local school authorities also provide or arrange for child-care services for children of their adult students.

In 1977, the Swedish government directed municipal adult schools to provide basic education programs for adults with a minimum level of knowledge and skills. Special attention was to be given to immigrants, the handicapped, and school dropouts. The development of trade and communication skills were the primary objectives of the program.

Municipal adult school teachers fulfill the same teacher education requirements as those who teach in the comprehensive school. Most teachers are connected to a comprehensive school and teach in the adult education program on a part-time basis. Since 1971 the College of Education in Stockholm has provided a special training program for those wishing to teach in municipal adult schools.

Government subsidies cover the entire cost of salaries for teachers and administrators. Instruction is free to all students, however, fees may be required for special study materials. Supplemental funds are available for recruitment and outreach programs.

In addition to municipal adult schools, there are two national schools located at Norrköping and Harnösand, directly administered by the national government. The purpose of these two schools is to provide comprehensive education to adults who do not have access to a program in their communities. "The courses take place either entirely on a correspondence basis or by correspondence combined each term with relatively short and intensive in-school courses."[1] In the spring term, the two national schools have an enrollment of approximately 4,570 students. The correspondence program is the most popular. Its enrollment has increased over that of the staggered instruction program.

## Other Forms of Swedish Adult Education

Several other forms of adult education are to be noted. First, the Swedish Broadcasting Corporation provides educational programs on radio and television. The broadcasts provide instruction for the comprehensive schools as well as for adult education programs. Most radio and television educational programs use supplementary study materials. Programs are offered on a correspondence basis and are increaingly in demand. Second, Sweden's public library system emphasizes adult reading programs and services to hospitals, nursing homes, and the armed forces including exhibitions, lectures, and discussion groups. The library system is so extensive that practically all municipalities have permanent library facilities or bookmobile services. A regional central library is located in each county. Third, training programs offered by private and public organizations play an important role in the total adult education effort in Sweden. Most large private companies have training departments which plan and sponsor courses and programs. Public organizations such as the Custom Service and Post Office offer employee training. Private companies and all levels of public organizations generally provide instructional support for training programs. Local government and private company staff training programs do not receive national government subsidies. Finally, cooperative movements offer training programs to ensure them-

[1] "Adult Education in Sweden," Fact Sheets on Sweden, The Swedish Institute FS 64 g Em April, 1978. p. 2.

selves a supply of qualified office holders.

## Points of Interest to American Educators

Swedish adult education is multi-faceted and serves a variety of audiences. The following are conclusions drawn from this overview.

1. All levels of public education are financed by public funds with no tuition fees being charged. With only a few exceptions, previously described adult education programs are offered free of charge to participants. Adult education accounts for an increasing share of national, county, and municipal government budgets. As a result of direct payments, subsidy systems and other forms of financial assistance, adult education is relatively free. Other sources of financial support are the popular movements, political and non-profit organizations, unions and private companies.

2. The development of adult education and Swedish democracy paralleled one another during the latter part of the 1800's. Adult education was perceived as a means of achieving social equality, freedom of choice as to education and occupation, full employment and continuous economic growth. This historic development distinguishes the growth of adult education in Sweden from that of other countries. The two movements were initiated simultaneously and developed together.

3. The folk high school movement was closely associated with the revival of rural areas. The folk high school concept was not a response to a single situation, but rather was the result of several factors, such as the need for improved education of adults so they would be able to participate more effectively in the emerging democratic society and the development of popular movements which emphasized quality of life rather than economic issues. The success of the folk high school movement continues to be a result of its flexibility in serving the educational needs of a changing adult population. Its emphasis on residential adult education opportunities for the general population was and still is a unique educational concept.

4. Sweden's historical development has resulted from and in turn has created a number of institutional structures and value orientations. For example, individuals by themselves have limited influence and identity in Swedish society. It is through membership in organizations that one obtains identity, influence, and assistance.

5. Sweden's adult education programs are intensive and extensive. Coordination of adult education programs to the degree found in Sweden is unique and is considered necessary to the development of mass education of adults. Government subsidies to all adult education programs regardless of sponsorship are provided and are indicative of the high priority Sweden is giving to adult education. Sweden's example has implications for other countries who desire to develop their human resources to foster national development.

6. Sweden's social welfare system was extensively developed through postwar legislation by the Social Democratic Party. National income was spent on social welfare programs such as unemployment, pensions, occupational injury and sickness insurance. In an effort to level class barriers and to increase the standard of living of workers, there is a growing push by the work force for increased involvement in company decision-making and greater job satisfaction.

7. There are many possible motives for studying during adulthood. Often these motives are closely associated with educational background and societal roles assumed by adults. It has been determined that Swedes who have limited compulsory education are reluctant to pursue their education while those with extensive educational experiences feel the most confident in pursuing educational alternatives.

8. Sweden's adult education system has many antecedents. Consequently, Swedish adult education exists in many different forms. Each has its own origin, and has developed along separate lines supported by different organizations, government agencies, and interest groups.

9. Sweden's present economy is based on industrial technology. Adult education in the form of training plays an essential role in maintaining full employment. The right of workers to participate in company decision-making and the collective bargaining process are mandated and seen as positive means to ensure productivity. Adult education is seen as a way to train managers and workers to participate effectively in the quality control process.

10. Financial assistance for adult study is provided in the form of compensation for earnings lost for a short period, student allowances, and loans for an extended period, and time off from work. To qualify for such allowances, a person must have been gainfully employed for at least five years or have been gainfully employed for at least two years and raised children on a full-time basis for at least three years.

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